

## Quality of Life Drives Site Selection

*February 9th, 2009*

*By Matt McQuade, Ohio Business Development Coalition*

Site location decisions often boil down to both rational and emotional factors. While a company's bottom line is immensely important, it is rarely the sole driving factor in choosing a location for an expansion or new operation.

Ironically it is the heart that rules over the head in location decisions. Even after a long and rigorous analysis of potential sites, the final site selections often look so similar on paper that emotion – a decision-maker's feelings about one of the options – is what separates the selected location over the alternatives.

Emotional influence can come from several areas. One of the most common is quality of life for both C-level executives and their employees. A CEO often asks themselves, "Would my family be happy living here?", "Can my employees and their families thrive here?"

The increasing influence of quality of life in the location decision process was recently addressed in the article "Weighing the Intangibles" in the December 2008/January 2009 issue of *Area Development* magazine. The article supports how quality of life factors are playing an increasingly important role in the site selection process. Most notably, the importance of quality of life for a company's ability to relocate employees or to attract top talent for IT, R&D Centers and corporate headquarters.

It's no secret that Ohio's exceptional amenities have caught the eyes of many CEO's. Not only does the state offer a strong business environment with nearly 60 Fortune 1000 business headquarters, the lowest taxes in the Midwest and a world-class university system, but Ohio also offers an uncompromised quality of life. Ohio's affordable housing, access to quality healthcare, parks and recreation and low commuting times are enticing business owners across the globe. A key indicator of Ohio's high quality of life is not just data, it is proven in the decisions of the business leaders who chose to relocate to Ohio.